

# Awareness And Practices Of Menstruation Hygiene Among Adolescent Girls

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## ABSTRACT

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Adolescent girls and women in India face social and cultural constraints and hidden taboos when it comes to menstruation hygiene. School attendance drops and local illnesses rise when people don't have access to clean toilet facilities and sanitary hygiene supplies. In Assam's tea garden regions, people still have a low level of knowledge about many health issues. The commencement of menarche is a significant life milestone that occurs throughout adolescence; as a result, it is essential to practise excellent hygiene habits during menstruation in order to keep a healthy life overall. The data was gathered by a community-wide house-to-house survey, with questions asked of females using a tailored questionnaire that had been previously developed and tested. Among the topics included in the survey were participants' socio-demographic information, their familiarity with menstruation, their menstrual hygiene routine, and any limits they may have. The teen's parent or legal guardian gave their verbal agreement before the interview, and the teen herself gave her assent. During the course of the research, all participants were given the guarantee that their information would remain private. The girls were informed about menstruation facts and how to stay clean throughout their period at the conclusion of the interview. Teenage girls' menstrual hygiene was found to be inadequate, according to this research. This is why it's so important to teach girls about menstruation and how to stay clean throughout it.

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**Keywords:** Menstrual Hygiene, Infections, Demographic, Menarche.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Menstruating women make up around 30% of India's population, or 355 million people. Gender inequality around menstruation persists in India. Because of the widespread misconceptions around menstruation, many girls experience social exclusion or early school dropouts each month. Nearly 23 million girls avoid continuing their education each year because they do not have access to adequate menstrual hygiene management services, such as sanitary napkins and education on menstruation, according to a 2014 study by the non-governmental organisation Dasra published "Spot On!" in 2014. The research also revealed some shocking figures. Of the moms whose daughters menstruated, 70% thought it was nasty, and 71% of the teenage girls didn't know what menstruation was until they hit puberty. Adolescence is a transitional period between childhood and maturity characterised by boundless energy, strength, and a strong desire to create new things, as well as favourable bodily resources. Developing dynamites, eager, exploratory, easily depressed, anaemic, and violent are all characteristics of the adolescent. For girls, who are more likely to experience common psychological issues like sadness and isolation, this is a pivotal time. In a society where people are often uncaring and distant, it may be very difficult for people with disabilities to go about their everyday lives as normally as possible. A teenage girl who is vision challenged need a tremendous amount of impact in order to survive in this world. Because of factors such as their longer life expectancy, poor social difficulties, and lack of access to treatments, visually impaired women are far more likely than visually impaired men throughout all countries and corners of the globe, regardless of caste, colour, or religion. (WHO 2000).

### 1.1 Meaning of Menstrual:

Taking additional precautions with your health and cleanliness is especially important during menstruation. Mood swings, period cramps, and other symptoms of a healthy woman's transition into menopause are common at this time. There are many taboos around menstruation because of the many myths and mysteries surrounding it. Because of its direct correlation to women's and girls' reproductive health, menstrual hygiene and other habits pertaining to females are of public health importance. Period hygiene is very important since it affects women's health by making them more prone to reproductive tract infections (RTIs).

## 1.2 Objectives of the Study

- The goal of this research is to better understand how teenage girls think about and deal with menstruation and its associated hygienic issues.
- Determine the connection between menstrual hygiene knowledge, attitude, and behaviour.
- In order to learn how visually impaired teenage females now see menstruation and what they think about it,

## II. Research Methodology

### 2.1 Research design

The theoretical framework within which an investigation will be carried out is known as a research design. It is the method via which a researcher zeroes in on the specific goal of the study. It takes into account a series of choices about data measurement, analysis, and gathering.

### 2.2 Study Area:

Present study has been conducted on the visually impaired adolescent girls who have to face the problems related with menstruation and menstrual hygiene in Davangere City as a universe.

### 2.3 Data Collection tools

For the purpose of this study, data has been collected through interview schedules using field survey method and analyzing the officially maintained documents. To collect the primary data, responses have been collected from girl students who were studying in Government Schools.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

**Table no 1.1. Age of the respondent at which period started**

| Data Analysis |            |             |
|---------------|------------|-------------|
| Age 12        | 42         | 28%         |
| Age 13        | 46         | 30.7%       |
| Age 14        | 44         | 29.3%       |
| Age 15        | 13         | 8.7%        |
| Age 16        | 5          | 3.3%        |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>150</b> | <b>100%</b> |

The above table the first and foremost question asked by the researcher was the age at which the menstrual period started among girls. among the total respondents only 28% had their periods started at the age of 12 or less. However, 30.7% had their periods started at the age of 13 and 29.3% had their periods started at the age of 14. It is only 8.7% and 3.3% respondents who had their periods started at the age of 15 and 16 respectively. It is because of their imbalanced hormonal growth, unbalanced diet, or medical issues like thyroid or obesity, stress, polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS).

**Table no 1.2 The number of days for which period lasts**

| Data Analysis |            |              |
|---------------|------------|--------------|
| 3 Days        | 6          | 4%           |
| 4 Days        | 60         | 40%          |
| 5 Days        | 72         | 48           |
| 6 Days        | 12         | 8%           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>150</b> | <b>100 %</b> |

The above table It is an important aspect to analyze the number of days for which period lasts. It helps in diagnosing the consistency of menstrual cycle and if there is any issue then it can also be diagnosed to survive from future unseen problems. only 4% respondents' period last for 3 days but 8% respondents' periods last for 6 days. Only 40 and 48% respondents have their periods lasting from 4 to 5 days respectively. A short period is

mostly a cause of stress, illness, and other things. It can also be the consequence of improper hormonal growth among girls. When girls have less period they face problems like stomach pain, irritation, hormonal imbalance.

**Table no 1.3 Things used during menstruation**

| Data Analysis    |            |             |
|------------------|------------|-------------|
| Sanitary Napkins | 87         | 58%         |
| Cloth            | 55         | 36.7%       |
| Both or other    | 8          | 5.3%        |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>150</b> | <b>100%</b> |

The above table From the things it means the resources used by girls during menstruation period. These things are like sanitary napkins, menstrual cups, templos, clean cloth, etc. It also improves the understanding and awareness among most of the families and thus, a total of 58% respondents replied that they use sanitary pads during menstruation. However, 36.7% respondents said that, they want to use cloth as they fear from the leakage of napkins. They are not sure to use napkins as it is costly and also leak sometimes. However, using cloth is a cheap affair for them and they can also change it multiple times. They also do not worry about its leakage issue. 5.3% respondents use both cloth and napkin as per their comfort.

**Table no 1.4 Hygiene precautions during periods**

| Data Analysis                                    |            |             |
|--|------------|-------------|
| Bath daily and wash vagina properly              | 39         | 25.9%       |
| Bath Daily, Use pad                              | 12         | 8%          |
| Change my pad after every four to six hours      | 31         | 20.7%       |
| Proper diet wash vagina properly and change pads | 12         | 8%          |
| Wash vagina properly and use sanitary pads       | 24         | 16%         |
| Don't Know                                       | 8          | 5.3%        |
| Other  | 24         | 16%         |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>150</b> | <b>100%</b> |

The above table It is important to identify the precautions taken by respondents during periods to maintain their menstrual hygiene. the importance of menstrual hygiene and also trying to maintain it. Around 25.9% respondents told that, they take bath daily and wash their vagina properly so that it should be clean and odour free. Around 8% said that, they take bath daily and use high quality sanitary pads for ensuring safe menstruation. Around 20.7% girls change pad after every 4 to 6 hours so that they get ensured of any leakage and also safe from germs issue. Similarly, 8% girls responded that they take proper diet, wash their vagina properly and change pads at equal intervals to ensure healthy and hygienic menstruation. 16% of the respondents replied that they wash their vagina properly and use sanitary pads. However, 5.3% respondents do not know anything to maintain menstrual hygiene and 16% said that they use other things to manage their menstrual hygiene. All the above replies state that, only 5% of the respondents were unaware of managing their menstrual hygiene which shows that with proper awareness programmes and seminars this issue can be taken care of.

**Table 1.5 Guidance in school**

|     |     |       |
|-----|-----|-------|
| Yes | 32  | 21.3% |
| No  | 118 | 78.7% |

Above the table apart from education, there are few other things which students learn from their schools like discipline, punctuality, team work, healthy life, maintaining hygiene, living a systematic lifestyle. Schools also do not give emphasis on teaching or guiding about managing menstrual health and hygiene. Almost 78.7% of the respondents denied to this fact that, they are been guided about menstrual health and hygiene in either their homes or schools. Only 21.3% girls accepted that, their family members and school teachers discuss about it. They shared that, when their parents talk about menstruation, then it does not feel like a problem or disease anymore.

#### IV. CONCLUSION:

The above identified findings explain the changing perception of menstruation from a non-discussed topic to a natural process which needs to be talked and discussed for attaining a healthy and hygienic generation in future. Menstrual health and hygiene is mostly ignored in major parts of society irrespective of culture, caste, status, religion, language or place. However, when it is the case of visually impaired girls then it becomes crucial to talk and discuss about menstrual hygiene. These girls who were the respondents of the study explained about their problems and challenges along with the restrictions and rules being faced by them. Their living standards, economic conditions, parents' perception and their attitude affect their way of managing menstruation and leading a healthy menstrual life. Most of the girls explained that in their initial years of menstruation they feel a lot of problems such as placing napkin properly, cleaning genitals, washing vagina regularly, changing pads, due to which they either drop out from their schools or feel embarrassed. Initially they do not understand what is happening with them as their periods were irregular, they face issues of leakage, or foul odor or sometimes they were unable to manage menstrual cramps. In their homes also they feel like untouchables and hate their periods as they were not allowed to move from one place, stay at one place or sleep at floor, not to go to kitchen or to play or to attend guests due to which they feel ignored. Moreover, some restrictions on eating and drinking habits or leaving school for 5 days or more than that irritated them a lot. Due to which they face a loss in studies and also their growth hampers. Therefore, they consider menstruation as a non-wanted disease.

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